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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 002698

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/11/2029

TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [GR](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY LOOKING TO MINIMIZE AEGEAN TENSIONS FOR
OLYMPICS; ENCOURAGING GREECE TO ENGAGE ON CBMS

REF: A. ANKARA 943

[B](#). ATHENS 1701

(U) Classified by Political Military Counselor Timothy A.
Betts. Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) PolmilCouns sought an update on the status of Greek-Turkish military relations in the wake of PM Erdogan's visit to Athens (ref B) from TGS/J5 Greece/Cyprus Director RADM Mucahit Sislioglu on May 10. The Admiral was hopeful that the PM's visit had laid the groundwork to move forward on better military-to-military relations. The relationship needed a push, he explained. The Greek military had failed to answer the letter TGS sent last February inviting Greek military officers to Turkey, despite indications that they were receptive and that the Greek Foreign Ministry was supportive (ref A). He allowed that the Turkish side had not pursued the matter very aggressively, explaining that once the policy was set by TGS/J5, action was transferred to TGS/J3. The operators "don't understand the importance of these simple meetings," he said. He also opined that the Greek side was likely preoccupied with preparations for the Olympics. Nonetheless, Sislioglu's office had prepared a follow-up letter that the Turkish attache in Athens delivered during the week of May 3. Sislioglu was "99% sure" the Greeks would respond within two weeks, although he had reason to believe the answer would be negative. In that event, TGS would ask MFA to inquire about the apparent change of heart in the next round of senior bilateral talks on the Aegean.

[1](#)2. (C) When asked whether the Greek and Turkish militaries had discussed Olympic security, Sislioglu said the Turks tried, but the Greeks were not interested. TGS wanted to work out arrangements for reduced military activity in the Aegean during the Olympics. Despite receiving a cold shoulder from their Greek counterparts, Turkey was moving forward with plans to reduce military flights and exercises in the Aegean region during the Olympics and the Special Olympics that follow. TGS would not announce these measures publicly but would inform MFA and the government of them. The government could then decide whether and how to make these steps public.

EDELMAN